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pean patent), DK (European patent), ES (European patent), FR (European patent), GB (European patent), GR (European patent), IT (European patent), JP, KR, LU (European patent), MC (European patent), NL (European patent), NL (European patent), NL (European patent) pean patent), SE (European patent).

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(54) Title: TECHNETIUM-99m LABELED POLYPEPTIDES FOR IMAGING

(57) Abstract

The invention relates to radiolabeled imaging of a mammalian body. The invention in particular provides for reagents labeled with technetium-99m for such imaging. The invention provides peptides which bind technetium-99m and which can be targeted to specific sites within a mammalian body.

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TECHNETIUM-99m LABELED POLYPEPTIDES FOR IMAGING BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to radiodiagnostic reagents and, more particularly, to polypeptides useful for producing technetium (Tc-99m) labeled radiodiagnostic agents. The invention relates to Tc-99m labeled reagents, kits for making such reagents, and methods for using such reagents.

Description of the Prior Art

U.S. Patent No. 4,861,869 (Nicolotti) describes coupling agents of the formula:

wherein R₂ and R₃ are the same or different and each represents a radical selected from the group consisting of alkyls having from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, aryls having from 6 to 8 carbon atoms and aklaryls having 7 to 9 carbon atoms, any of which can be substituted with one or more hydroxyl, alkoxy, carboxy or sulfonate groups; n is either 1 or 2; and X is an activating group capable of forming an amide bond with an alpha or beta amino group of a biologically useful protein or polypeptide molecule.

U.S. Patent No. 4,861,869 also describes compounds such as S-benzoylmercaptoacetylglyclglyclglycine.

The coupling agents are bound to large peptides such as antibodies or fragments thereof and complexed to Tc-99m.

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U.S. Patent Nos. 4,571,430, 4,575,556 and 4,434,151 (Byrne et al.) describe compounds of the formula:

wherein R is hydrogen or lower alkyl, R_1 and R_2 are individually hydrogen or lower alkyl or taken together form oxo; R_3 is an amino protecting group where R_1 and R_2 taken together form oxo; R_4 is hydrogen or lower alkyl; R_5 is hydrogen or a thiol protecting group; and y and z are integers from 0 to 2; which are bifunctional chelating agents and as such can couple radionuclides to terminal amino-containing compounds capable of localizing in an organ or tissue which is desired to be imaged.

Bryson et al., *Inorg. Chem.* 27: 2154-2161 (1988) and *Inorg. Chem.* 29: 2948-2951 (1990), describes thiolate ligands for complexing with technetium of the formula:

European Patent Application No. 86100360.6, filed January 13, 1986, describes dithio, diamino, or diamidocarboylic acids or amine complexes useful for making technetium imaging agents.

Other references of interest include Khaw et al., J. Nucl. Med. 23: 1011 (1982); Rhodes, B.A., Sem. Nucl. Med. 4: 281 (1974); Davidson et al., Inorg. Chem. 20: 1629 (1981); and Byrne and Tolman, J. Nucl. Med.

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24: 126 (1983). See particularly Fritzberg et al., J. Nucl. Med. 23: 592 (1982); Fritzberg et al., ibid. 23: 17 (1982), for descriptions of mercaptoacetyl derivatives of ethylene diamine carboxylic acid derivates. See also U.S. Patent Nos. 4,434,151, 4,444,690 and 4,472,509.

European Patent Application 88104755.9 describes various S-protected mercaptoacetylglycylglycine chelating groups bound to large proteins such as antibodies.

European Patent Application 84109831.2 describes technetium complexes of compounds of the formula I and II:

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and

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wherein R and R_6 are each selected from hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted lower alkyl or -COR where R_9 is selected from hydroxy, substituted or unsubstituted lower alkoxy, substituted or unsubstituted amino, glycine ester, or an activated leaving group; R_1 is selected from hydrogen, or substituted or unsubstituted lower alkyl; R_2 and R_3 are each selected from hydrogen or a thiol protecting group; and R_4 , R_5 , R_7 , and R_8 are each selected from hydrogen or lower alkyl; and salts thereof. These complexes

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were used primarily as renal function monitoring agents.

Arginylglycylaspartate (Arg-Gly-Asp or RGD) and derivative peptides are known to bind to blood clots (see U.S. Patent Nos. 4,792,525, 4,857,508 and 4,578,079) and RGD derivatives have been labeled with technetium as imaging agents, Journal of Nuclear Medicine 31, pp. 757, No. 209 (1990).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention encompasses polypeptides for labeling with technetium-99m and imaging target sites within a mammalian body comprising (a) a specific binding polypeptide region which specifically binds to the target site to be imaged, and (b) a technetium binding region of the formula Cp(aa)Cp wherein Cp is a protected cysteine and (aa) is an amino acid and wherein the technetium binding region is covalently bound to the specific binding polypeptide region. The invention includes technetium-99m complexes and methods for using the technetium-99m complexes to image target sites within a mammalian body.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The Cp(aa)Cp technetium binding group is covalently linked to the specific binding polypeptide preferably by one or more amino acids, most preferably glycine. Alternatively, the Cp(aa)Cp technetium binding group may be directly covalently linked to the specific binding polypeptide or other covalent linking groups can be used such as bifunctional amino/carboxy compounds which are not naturally-occurring amino acids.

Representative specific binding polypeptide sequences are:

Atherosclerotic Plaque Binding Peptides

YRALVDTLK RALVDTLK RALVDTLKFVTQAEGAK YAKFRETLEDTRDRMY AKFRETLEDTRDRMY YAALDLNAVANKIADFEL

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Atherosclerotic Plaque Binding Peptides (cont'd.)	Atherosclerotic	Plaque	Binding	Peptides	(cont'd.)
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AALDLNAVANKIADFEL
YRALVDTLKFVTEQAKGA
RALVDTLKFVTEQAKGA
YRALVDTEFKVKQEAGAK
RALVDTEFKVKQEAGAK
YRALVDTLKFVTQAEGAK

Peptides Targeted to Infections and Atherosclerotic Plaque

VGVAPGVGVAPGVGVAPG
VPGVGVPGVGVPGVGVPGVG
formyl.Nleu.LF.Nleu.YK
formyl MIFL
formyl MLFK
15 formyl MLFI
formyl MFIL
formyl MFLI
formyl MLIF
formyl MILF

Thrombus

VGVAPG formyl MLF

NDGDFEEIPEEYLQ
25 NDGDFEEIPEEY(SO₃Na)LQ
GPRG

Platelets

D-Phe.PRPGGGGNGDFEEIPEEYL RRRRRRRRGDV PLYKKIIKKLLES RGD RGDS

Infection and Atherosclerotic Plaque

YIGSR 35 CH₂CO. YIGSRC

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Alzheimers Disease (Amyloid Plaque)

EKPLONFTLSFR

[Single letter abbreviations for amino acids can be found in G. Zubay, Biochemistry (2d ed.), 1988, (MacMillan Publishing: New York), p. 33.]

In the Cp(aa)Cp, the Cp is a protected cysteine where the Sprotecting groups are the same or different and may be but not limited to:

-CH₂-aryl (aryl is phenyl or alkyl or alkyloxy substituted phenyl);

-CH-(aryl)2, (aryl is phenyl or alkyl or alkyloxy substituted phenyl);

-C-(aryl)3, (aryl is phenyl or alkyl or alkyloxy substituted phenyl);

-CH₂-(4-methoxyphenyl);

-CH-(4-pyridyl)(phenyl)₂;

 $-C(CH_3)_3$

-9-phenylfluorenyl;

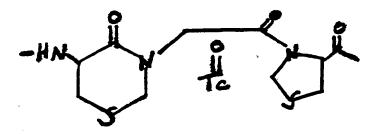
-CH2NHCOR (R is unsubstituted or substituted alkyl or aryl);

-CH2-NHCOOR (R is unsubstituted or substituted alkyl or aryl);

-CONHR (R is unsubstituted or substituted alkyl or aryl);

-CH₂-S-CH₂-phenyl

When Cp-gly-Cp is combined with technetium, the following complex with the protecting groups removed is formed:



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The preferred protecting group has the formula -CH₂-NHCOR wherein R is a lower alkyl having 1 and 8 carbon atoms, phenyl or phenyl-substituted with lower alkyl, hydroxyl, lower alkoxy, carboxy, or lower alkoxycarbonyl.

Compounds of the present invention can generally advantageously be

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prepared on an amino acid synthesizer. Compounds of this invention are advantageous in that they are soluble and the sulfur is stabilized.

In forming the complex of radioactive technetium with the compounds of this invention, the technetium complex, a salt of technetium-99m pertechnetate, is reacted with the compound of this invention in the presence of a reducing agent such as stannous chloride ferrous ion or sodium dithionite. These technetium labeled complexes can also be made by exchange of a prereduced technetium -99m complex. The complexes are conveniently provided in a kit form comprising a sealed vial containing a predetermined quantity of a compound to be labeled and a sufficient amount of reducing agent to label the compound with technetium-99m. Alternatively, the complex may be formed by reacting the compound of this invention with a pre-formed labile complex of technetium and another compound. This process is known as ligand exchange, is well known to those skilled in the art, and the labile complex may be formed using such compounds as tartrate, citrate, gluconate or mannitol, for example. Among the technetium-99m pertechnetate salts are included the alkali metal salts such as the sodium salt or ammonium salts, or lower alkyl ammonium The reaction of the compound of this invention with pertechnetate or preformed labile complex can be carried out in an aqueous medium at room temperature. The anionic complex which has a charge of -1 is formed in the aqueous medium in the form of a salt with a suitable cation such as sodium, ammonium cation, mono, di- or tri-lower alkyl amine Any conventional salt of the anionic complex with a pharmaceutically acceptable cation can be used in accordance with this invention.

In carrying out the reaction of the compounds of this invention with pertechnetate or a labile complex to form the anionic complex, the thiol protecting group is cleaved. Therefore, this reaction not only introduces the radioactive metal into the compound but also cleaves the thiol protecting group. All of the aforementioned thiol protecting groups are cleaved by a

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reaction of salts of radioactive metals in accordance with this invention.

In forming the complex the radioactive material has a suitable amount of radioactivity. In forming the Tc-99m radioactive anionic complexes, it is generally preferred to form radioactive complexes in solutions containing radioactivity at concentrations of from about 0.01 milliCuries (mCi) to 100 mCi per ml.

The complex can be used for visualizing organs such as the kidney for diagnosing disorders in these organs, tumors and blood clots can also be imaged. In accordance with this invention, the anionic complex either as a complex or as a salt with a pharmaceutically acceptable cation is administered in a single unit injectable dose. Any of the common carriers such as sterile saline solution, plasma, etc., can be utilized after the radiolabeling for preparing the injectable solution to diagnostically image various organs, clots, tumors and the like in accordance with this invention. Generally, the unit dose to be administered has a radioactivity of about 0.01 mCi to about 100 mCi, preferably 1 mCi to 20 mCi. The solution to be injected at unit dosage is from about 0.01 ml to about 10 ml. After intravenous administration, imaging of the organ in vivo can take place in a matter of a few minutes. However, imaging can take place, if desired, in hours or even longer, after injecting into patients. In most instances, a sufficient amount of the administered dose will accumulate in the area to be imaged within about 0.1 of an hour to permit the taking of scintiphotos. Any conventional method of imaging for diagnostic purposes can be utilized in accordance with this invention.

The complexes may be administered intravenously in any conventional medium for intravenous injection such as an aqueous saline medium, or in blood plasma medium. Such medium may also contain conventional pharmaceutical adjunct materials such as, for example, pharmaceutically acceptable salts to adjust the osmotic pressure, buffers, preservatives and the like. Among the preferred mediums are normal saline and plasma.

The methods for making and labeling these compounds are more fully illustrated in the following examples.

Example 1

Cys(Acm)GlyCys(Acm)GlyGlyArgGlyAspSer

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The title compound was prepared on a 0.25 millimole scale using an Applied Biosystems Model 431A peptide Synthesizer, N-terminus Fmoc protection and HMP resin (see Scheme). The product was cleaved from the resin using 95% trifluoroacetic acid at room temperature for 3 hours. Work-up and high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) purification (using a Vydac 2.20cm x 25cm, 10um, C-18 column with a 20-minute gradient of 0.1% trifluoroacetic acid to 70% acetonitrile/ 0.1% trifluoroacetic acid at a flow rate of 25 ml/min) gave 50 mg of the title compound, 95% pure. (HPLC peak eluted at 5.5 min; Pos. ion FABMS Calc MM 952.97, Found 953).

Scheme for Preparation of the Title Compound FmocSer(tBu) HMP Resin -----> FmocSer(tBu) Resin (a) FmocGly FmocAsp(OtBu) 5 ----> FmocAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin ---FmocArg(Mtr) FmocGlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin ---(b) 10 FmocGly FmocArg(Mtr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin ------FmocGly PmocGlyArg(Mtr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin ----15 PmocCys(Acm) FmocGlyGlyArg(Mtr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin -----FmocCys(Acm)GlyGlyArg(Mtr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin 20 FmocGly ----> (b) FmocGlyCys(Acm)GlyGlyArg(Htr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin FmocCys(Acm) 25 (b) FmocCys(Acm)GlyCys(Acm)GlyGlyArg(Mtr)GlyAsp(OtBu)Ser(tBu) Resin ----> (c) 30 Cys(Acm)GlyCys(Acm)GlyGlyArgGlyAspSer DCC, HOB, NMP (a) 1.piperidine, NMP, 2. DCC, HOB, NMP 1.piperidine, NMP, 2. 95% CF₁CO₂H, 3. HPLC (b) (c) dcyclohexylcarbodiimide 35 DCC hydroxybenztriazole HOB NMP N-methylpyrrolidinone p-hydroxymethylphenoxymethylpolystyrene HHP 9-fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl Fmoc = tert-butyl 40 tBu 4-methoxy-2,3,6-trimethylbenzenesulfonyl Mtr acetamidomethyl Acm =

Example 2

Radiolabeling of Compound of Example 1 with Tc-99m

0.3 mg of the compound prepared as in Example 1 was dissolved in 0.3 ml of 0.05M potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) containing 0.5 mM EDTA. Tc-99m gluceptate was prepared by reconstituting a Glucoscan vial (E.I. DuPont de Nemours, Inc.) with 1.0 ml of Tc-99m sodium pertechnetate containing 26 mCi. After 15 minutes at room temperature, 75 ul of Tc-99m gluceptate was added to 0.3 mg of the compound prepared as in Example 1 and boiled for 45 minutes.

The extent of Tc-99m labeling of the peptide was determined by chomatography using Merck silica gel 60 F_{250} aluminum-backed strips which were spotted with 10 ul of sample and chromatographed with acetonitrile:0.5M sodium chloride solvent (15:85) approximately 2% of Tc-99m radioactivity remained at R_f 0.0, confirming that no significant Tc-99m colloids or aggregates were generated.

The Tc-99m labeled peptide purity was determined by HPLC using a Brownlee Spheri-5 (5um) resin, RP-18, 220 x 4.6 mm column and the following gradient: 0% A (CH₃CN:H₂O:TFA, 70:30:0.1) and 100% B (0.1% TFA in H₂O) to 100% A + 0% B over 10 minutes at 1.5 ml/min; and then held at the 100% A solvent for 5 minutes. This protocol yielded 100% of the radiometric species detected (by in-line NaI detector) as a single species (retention time = 10.9 min). Tc-99m gluceptate and Tc-99m sodium pentechnetate elute between 1 and 4 minutes under identical conditions, confirming the identity of the Tc-99m labeled peptide isolated.

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What is claimed is:

	1.	A polypeptide for labeling with technetium-99m and imaging
target	sites	within a mammalian body comprising:

- (a) a specific binding polypeptide region which specifically binds to the target site to be imaged and
 - (b) a technetium binding region of the formula Cp(aa)Cp

wherein Cp is a protected cysteine and (aa) is an amino acid and wherein the technetium binding region is covalently bound to the specific binding polypeptide region.

- 2. A polypeptide according to claim 1 wherein the specific binding polypeptide region and Cp(aa)Cp is covalently linked through one or more amino acids.
- 3. A polypeptide according to claim 1 wherein the protected cysteine has a protecting group of the formula

 -CH₂-NH-CO-R

wherein R is a lower alkyl having 1 to 6 carbon atoms, phenyl, or phenyl substituted with lower alkyl, hydroxy, lower alkoxy, carboxy, or lower alkoxycarbonyl, or 2-,3-,4-pyridyl.

4. A polypeptide according to claim 1 wherein Cp(aa)Cp has the formula:

CH₂SCH₂NHCOCH₃
-HN-CH-CO-NH-CH₂-CO-NH-CH-COCH₂-S-CH₂-NHCOCH₃

5. A polypeptide according to claim 1 wherein the specific

binding polypeptide region specifically binds to clots, tumors, sites of infection, atherosclerotic plaques, amyloid plaques or bone.

6. A polypeptide according to claim 1 wherein the specific binding polypeptide region is selected from polypeptides consisting of the amino acid sequences:

YRALVDTLK RALVDTLK RALVDTLKFVTQAEGAK YAKFRETLEDTRDRMY 10 AKFRETLEDTRDRMY YAALDLNAVANKIADFEL AALDLNAVANKIADFEL YRALVDTLKFVTEQAKGA RALVDTLKFVTEQAKGA 15 YRALVDTEFKVKQEAGAK RALVDTEFKVKQEAGAK YRALVDTLKFVTQAEGAK VGVAPGVGVAPGVGVAPG VPGVGVPGVGVPGVG 20 formyl.Nleu.LF.Nleu.YK formyl MIFL formyl MLFK formyl MLFI formyl MFIL 25 formyl MFLI formyl MLIF formyl MILF **TKPR VGVAPG** 30 formyl MLF NDGDFEEIPEEYLQ NDGDFEEIPEEY(SO₃Na)LQ **GPRG** D-Phe.PRPGGGGNGDFEEIPEEYL 35 RRRRRRRRGDV PLYKKIIKKLLES RGD **RGDS YIGSR** 40 CH₂CO. YIGSRC

EKPLQNFTLSFR

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- 7. The polypeptide of claim 6 bound to technetium-99m.
- 8. A complex formed by reacting a compound of claim 1 with technetium-99m in the presence of a reducing agent.
- 9. The complex of claim 8, wherein the said reducing agent is selected from the group of a dithionite ion, a stannous ion, or a ferrous ion.
 - 10. A complex formed by labelling a compound of claim 1 with technetium-99m by ligand exchange of a prereduced technetium-99m complex.
- 11. A kit for preparing a radiopharmaceutical preparation, said kit comprising sealed vial containing a predetermined quantity of a compound of claim 1 and a sufficient amount of reducing agent to label said compound with technetium-99m.
- 12. A method for imaging a target site within a mammalian body comprising administering an effective diagnostic amount of a polypeptide of claim 1 which is labeled with technetium-99m and wherein the specific binding polypeptide region binds to the target site, and detecting the localized technetium-99m.
 - 13. The process of preparing the peptide according to Claim 1 wherein the peptide is chemically synthesized in vitro.
 - 14. The process of preparing the peptide according to Claim 13 wherein the peptide is synthesized by solid phase peptide synthesis.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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According to Int. Cl.		Classification (IPC) or to both Nation A 61 K 49/02	al Classification and IPC		
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III. DOCUMI	ENTS CONSIDERE	D TO BE RELEVANT ⁹			
Category °	Citation of De	ocument, 11 with indication, where appr	ropriate, of the relevant passages 12		Relevant to Claim No.13
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"A" docur consi "E" earlier filing "L" docur which citatie "O" docur other "P" docur later	dered to be of particer document but publics (adate ment which may throw a is cited to establish on or other special rement referring to an emeans means than the priority dat	neral state of the art which is not ular relevance ished on or after the international w doubts on priority claim(s) or the publication date of another eason (as specified) oral disclosure, use, exhibition or to the international filing date but	"T" later document published or priority date and not i cited to understand the p invention "X" document of particular recannot be considered not involve an inventive step "Y" document of particular recannot be considered to i document is combined will ments, such combination in the art. "&" document member of the	n conflict with the rinciple or theory the claimed or cannot be colored to the claim to the clai	ne application but y underlying the med invention considered to med invention ive step when the sther such docu- p a person skilled
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٠	AND CO.) 16 May 1984, see claims (cited in the	
	application)	
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INTERNATI AL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

Fui/US 92/00757

	Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)
This inte	national search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:
1. XX	Claims Nos.: PLEASE SEE REMARK!!!! because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
A1 hu	though claim 12 is directed to a diagnostic method practised on the man/animal body the search has been carried out and based on the alleged fects of the compound / compositon.
,	Claims Nos.: secause they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such in extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
з. 🦳 (
3. LJ	Claims Nos.: ecause they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).
Box II	Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)
This Inter	national Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:
ı. 🗆 ′	is all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all earchable claims.
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2.	as all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all earchable claims. As all searchable claims could be searches without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment f any additional fee.
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